

What is claimed

1. A vacuum cleaner, comprising:
 - a housing;
 - a nozzle inlet;
 - a suction generator carried on said housing;
 - 5 a dirt vessel carried on said housing, said dirt vessel including a sidewall and an open end; and
 - a plunger received in said dirt vessel, said plunger being selectively displaceable between a first position spaced along said sidewall away from said open end and a second position spaced along said sidewall adjacent said
 - 10 open end.
2. The vacuum cleaner of claim 1, wherein said plunger includes a margin slidingly engaging an inner surface of said sidewall.
3. The vacuum cleaner of claim 2, wherein said margin includes a cleaning element in engagement with said sidewall.
4. The vacuum cleaner of claim 3, wherein said cleaning element is a resilient wiper.

5. The vacuum cleaner of claim 3, wherein said cleaning element is a brush.
6. The vacuum cleaner of claim 3, wherein said cleaning element is a pad.
7. The vacuum cleaner of claim 3, further including a door for closing said open end of said dirt vessel.
8. The vacuum cleaner of claim 7, wherein said door is connected by a hinge to said sidewall.
9. The vacuum cleaner of claim 8, further including a latch for securing said door in a closed position relative to said sidewall.
10. The vacuum cleaner of claim 7, wherein said dirt vessel includes an inlet and an outlet.
11. The vacuum cleaner of claim 10, wherein said inlet is in said sidewall.
12. The vacuum cleaner of claim 11, wherein said outlet is in said sidewall.
13. The vacuum cleaner of claim 12, wherein a screen covers said outlet.
14. The vacuum cleaner of claim 11, wherein said outlet is in said door.

15. The vacuum cleaner of claim 14, wherein a filter element is carried on said door over said outlet.
16. The vacuum cleaner of claim 7, further including a filter element in said dirt vessel.
17. The vacuum cleaner of claim 16, wherein said filter element is cylindrical in shape.
18. The vacuum cleaner of claim 17, wherein said dirt vessel defines a dirt collection chamber that is cylindrical in shape and said filter element is concentrically received within said chamber.
19. The vacuum cleaner of claim 18, further including an inlet in said door.
20. The vacuum cleaner of claim 19, further including an outlet in said door.
21. The vacuum cleaner of claim 21, wherein said filter element is carried on said door over said outlet.
22. The vacuum cleaner of claim 1, wherein said housing includes a nozzle section incorporating said nozzle inlet and a canister section.

23. The vacuum cleaner of claim 22, wherein said nozzle section and said canister section are pivotally connected together.

24. The vacuum cleaner of claim 7, wherein an inlet is in said sidewall and an outlet is in said plunger.

25. The vacuum cleaner of claim 24, wherein said plunger carries a filter element on said outlet.

26. The vacuum cleaner of claim 25, wherein said sidewall and said door define a cylindrical dirt collection chamber.

27. The vacuum cleaner of claim 26, wherein said filter element is cylindrical.

28. A dirt vessel, comprising:

a sidewall having an open end; and

a plunger received in said sidewall, said plunger being selectively displaceable between a first position spaced along said sidewall away from said open end and a second position spaced along said sidewall adjacent said open end.

29. The dirt vessel of claim 28, wherein said plunger includes a margin slidably engaging an inner surface of said sidewall.

30. The dirt vessel of claim 29, wherein said margin includes a cleaning element in engagement with said sidewall.
31. The dirt vessel of claim 30, wherein said cleaning element is a resilient wiper.
32. The dirt vessel of claim 30, wherein said cleaning element is a brush.
33. The dirt vessel of claim 30, wherein said cleaning element is a pad.
34. The dirt vessel of claim 30, further including a door for closing said open end of said dirt vessel.
35. The dirt vessel of claim 34, wherein said door is connected by a hinge to said sidewall.
36. The dirt vessel of claim 35, further including a latch for securing said door in a closed position relative to said sidewall.
37. The dirt vessel of claim 34, wherein said dirt vessel includes an inlet and an outlet.
38. The dirt vessel of claim 37, wherein said inlet is in said sidewall.

39. The dirt vessel of claim 38, wherein said outlet is in said sidewall.
40. The dirt vessel of claim 39, wherein a screen covers said outlet.
41. The dirt vessel of claim 38, wherein said outlet is in said door.
42. The dirt vessel of claim 41, wherein a filter element is carried on said door over said outlet.
43. The dirt vessel of claim 34, further including a filter element in said dirt vessel.
44. The dirt vessel of claim 43, wherein said filter element is cylindrical in shape.
45. The dirt vessel of claim 44, wherein said dirt vessel defines a dirt collection chamber that is cylindrical in shape and said filter element is concentrically received within said chamber.
46. The dirt vessel of claim 45, further including an inlet in said door.
47. The dirt vessel of claim 46, further including an outlet in said door.

48. The dirt vessel of claim 47, wherein said filter element is carried on said door over said outlet.

49. A method of cleaning dirt and debris from a dirt vessel of a vacuum cleaner, comprising:

equipping said dirt vessel with a plunger at one end of a dirt collection chamber in said dirt vessel; and

5 instructing a user to displace said plunger through said dirt collection chamber in order to remove dirt and debris from said dirt collection chamber.